

Foot and Mouth Disease: Mtubatuba Outbreak Follow-up Report and Surveillance Update

23 February 2022



agriculture, land reform
& rural development

Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Report compiled by:

Directorate: Animal Health

This report includes all information as available by close of business on 23 February 2022. All the updates contained in this report may not currently reflect on the OIE WAHIS system due to technical difficulties with the OIE reporting system.

Update reports will be issued on a monthly basis, unless there are significant changes to the previous report.

1. Current status

Since the previous update report of January 2022, a new cluster of infected dip tanks was identified between the two clusters previously affected. This new cluster is still within the reduced Disease Management Area (DMA) in KwaZulu-Natal. Ten (10) new locations has been confirmed as positive for FMD, bringing the number of affected locations to 35. This situation warrants the use of vaccination to reduce the viral load and thus control further spread of the disease. Movement control measures remain in place in the DMA and serological and clinical surveillance is ongoing.

The map hereunder indicates the FMD outbreaks in KwaZulu-Natal since the start of the event in May 2021. Red dots indicate current open outbreaks, which are all in the DMA, and black dots indicate outbreaks that have been closed with the OIE.

Map 1: FMD outbreaks in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.



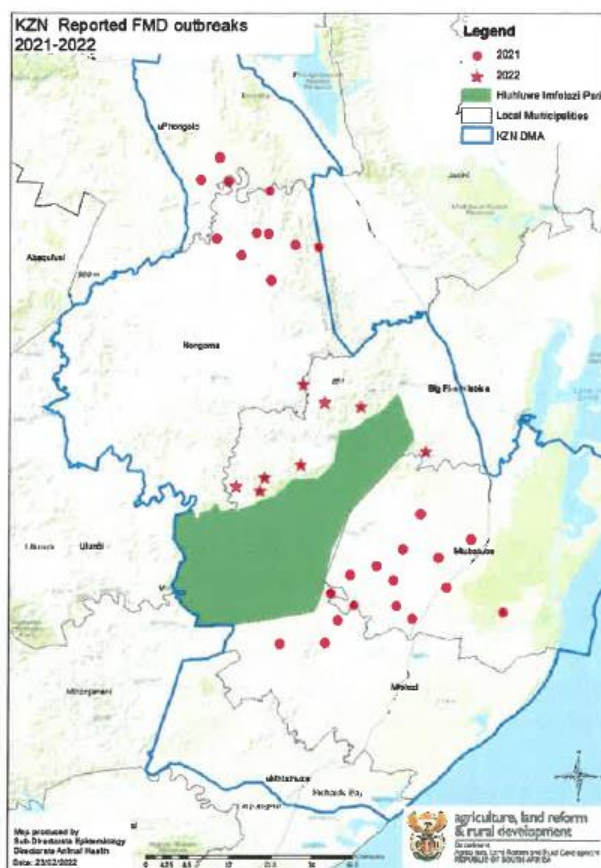
2. Affected locations

The positive dip tank locations identified in 2021 encompass two clusters in communal grazing land in Hluhluwe and Nongoma. New positive locations were reported in Hlabisa in January and February 2022, between the two main clusters, all still within the Disease Management Area. Clinical inspection and sample collection is being intensified in the newly identified infected area. The outbreak in the new hotspot in Hlabisa is showing signs of active spread and some of the newly affected dip tanks are close to the boundary of the DMA and the Hluhluwe Imfolozi Game Reserve.

Page 2 of 5

The map hereunder indicates the two 2021 clusters of infected dip tanks in Nongoma and Hluhluwe, as well as the newly identified (2022) positive dip tanks in the Hlabisa area.

Map 2: FMD positive dip tanks in KwaZulu-Natal



3. Control measures implemented

3.1 Declaration of a Disease Management Area:

The Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development declared a Disease Management Area (DMA) in the KwaZulu-Natal Province in the Government Gazette No. 44783 on 30 June 2021, which was reduced in size on 7 September 2021, as declared in the Government Gazette No. 45109. This reduced DMA with all of its control measures is still in place.

3.2 Movement control in the DMA:

There has been no change in the movement restrictions on cloven-hoofed animals, their products and genetic material out of, into, within or through the revised DMA. Roadblocks and Visible Veterinary Patrols continue to monitor movements of animals within, through and out of the DMA.

Page 3 of 5

3.3 Vaccination:

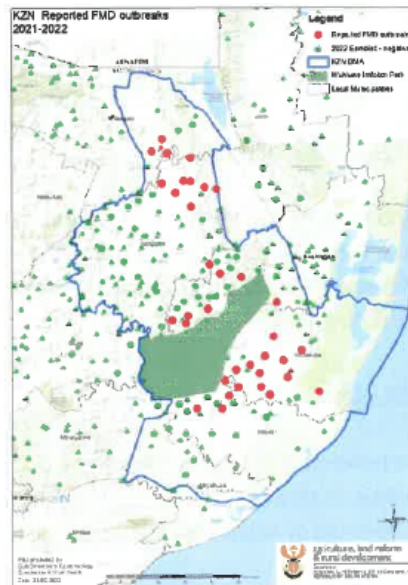
The new flare-up of infection warrants the use of vaccination to reduce the viral load and thus control further spread of the disease. At this stage, vaccination will be limited to cattle within the DMA, in order to slow down the spread of the disease, as well as to prevent spread out of the DMA and into the Game Reserve. The intention is also not to vaccinate all animals inside the DMA, but only as necessary to contain the spread of the disease. A risk-based approach will be followed, to ensure that the areas at highest risk are vaccinated first. It is estimated that 40 000 animals will be vaccinated during the initial vaccination campaign, which will commence within the next month.

4. Epidemiological investigation and surveillance

Clinical and serological surveillance around the affected areas continue, with intensified inspections around the newly identified infected dip tank. The virus involved in the newly affected area is the same SAT 2 serotype that was involved since the start of the outbreak in May 2021. Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) as well as serological detection of antibodies against the virus at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Research OIE Reference Laboratory - Agricultural Research Council confirmed all infections to date.

Since the start of the outbreak in May 2021, samples have been collected from more than 400 locations in the province. Two rounds of serological surveillance have been completed and a third round is underway, which will mainly focus on the areas adjacent to the newly identified positive dip tanks. The map hereunder indicates surveillance that has been done since the start of the outbreak to date. The red dots indicate the positive locations, while green dots and triangles indicate negative locations as tested in the surveillance rounds conducted in 2021 and 2022.


Map 3: Surveillance in the KZN FMD outbreak 2021 – 2022



Page 4 of 5

5. Trade implications

There has been no change in the trade implications since the previous report. Most trade partners retained the agreements negotiated in 2019, following the loss of South Africa's FMD free zone status, for commodities processed to ensure inactivation of the FMD virus and for pigs, pig semen, raw pork and pork products from known FMD free pig compartments.


Director Animal Health
Date: 2022-02-24

Media Statement
01 March 2022

VACCINATION TO CONTROL THE OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN KWA-ZULU NATAL

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development would like to announce the vaccination campaign of animals in the Disease Management Area following the outbreak of FMD in the new hotspot KwaHlabisa.

The outbreak is showing signs of active spread and some of the newly affected dip tanks are close to the boundary of the Disease Management Area and the Hluhluwe Umfolozi Game Reserve. This situation warrants the use of vaccination to reduce the viral load and thus control further spread of the disease.

At this stage, vaccination will be limited to cattle within the Disease Management Area, in order to slow down the spread of the disease, as well as to prevent spread out of the Disease Management Area and into the Game Reserve. The intention is also not to vaccinate all animals inside the Disease Management Area, but only as necessary to contain the spread of the disease. A risk-based approach will be followed, to ensure that the areas at highest risk are vaccinated first. It is estimated that 40 000 animals will be vaccinated during the initial vaccination campaign, which will commence this month.

Communities that are affected by this decision will be engaged by the KZN Veterinary Services in the next few weeks, prior to vaccination starting. Market access support to these communities will be provided as and when appropriate.

The Department is actively engaging with a panel of implementing agents that have the expertise to undertake certain identified functions aimed at supporting farmers within the Disease Management Area who have been affected by FMD control measures and movement controls in the past 8 months.

The movement protocol and permit system for movement of cloven-hoofed animals remains in place in the reduced Disease Management Area. A renewed call is made to all stakeholders to continue complying with the movement restrictions still in place, as these restrictions are necessary to prevent the escape of the virus out of the affected areas, and therefore shorten the duration of the outbreak.

Movement of cloven-hoofed animals and their products into, out of, through, or within the reduced DMA is still only allowed on authority of a permit issued by the Veterinary Services of the area. The movement protocol can be obtained from KZN Veterinary Services. Livestock owners are encouraged to submit all applications for movement to the Provincial Veterinary Movement Control Officers for evaluation and risk assessment. Applications and queries can be submitted to fmdpermitskzn@gmail.com. Visible Veterinary Patrols and roadblocks will remain in place in the reduced DMA to control the movement of livestock and to monitor adherence to the movement protocol.

In January 2022, there was a sudden flare-up of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in KwaZulu Natal, which was first reported in May 2021. A new cluster of infected diptanks was identified in Hlabisa, between the two clusters previously affected. This new cluster is still within the reduced Disease Management Area in KwaZulu Natal, however, it remains in communal grazing land, where all epidemiologically linked diptanks are at high risk of infection.

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